

Child and Family Services Update

July 3, 2003



Region Directors bid Paul Curtis a fond farewell. (l. to r., LaRay Brown, Salt Lake Valley Region Director; Todd Minchey, Southwest Region Director; Paul Curtis, Western Region Director (leaving us as of the end of June); Richard Anderson, Statewide Director; Katy Larsen, Northern Region Director; and Ron Law, Associate Region Director, Eastern Region.

Good Friends Are Forever!

By Mary Steck

For those of you who may not be aware, Paul Curtis, Child and Family Services' Western Region Director will be leaving us as of the end of June. Brent Platt will be filling in for him as "Acting Director" (Brent has been Paul's Associate Region Director for the last couple of years). We want to send along with Paul our very best wishes, and hope he now has time to enjoy his family and his travels. We would like to share with you a letter Richard Anderson wrote for Paul and read at his open house on June 27th . . .

Dear Paul,

You like to make us think that you are a tough guy. We know that you have a heart as big as they come. We also know that under that tough gruff talking is a most sincere and humble gentleman. What we all know is that you are genuine and authentic. Because you have cared so much about the children and families we serve their lives have been and will continue to be better. Because you cared about us, the people who work in human services, our lives have been better and we are a better organization.

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Paul, as I have written to you in your last performance evaluation from the division (I am asking that Marjan continue to provide these annual performance evaluations at home), you will be greatly missed. You are an innovator with a keen sense for knowing what people really need, and then amassing resources to meet those needs. I have entitled your work philosophy as this, "Just do something and do something that makes things better." You are a top "Mentor" in the greatest sense. You knew that government, alone, could not meet real human needs. You showed us that it takes "real people" helping "real people" that makes the greatest difference. You have demonstrated this with your staff, as well as with the families and children you have served.

We are all personally indebted to you for your staying on a little longer. We needed your wisdom this past year to get us to a better place before you left. You have created an environment where people can give their best, working together, in behalf of children, adults and families at risk. Many of us are better professionals and, more importantly, better people because of your influence on us. You were never afraid to go into the trenches with us, to fight the good fight (when necessary), and to stand by our side when we were struggling.

When I saw the picture that was on the announcement for your retirement, you sitting on that big Harley Davidson, I realized that the costs of Medicare are surely going to increase. That's okay with us. You deserve all the fun and enjoyment you can receive on into the future.

As time goes by, there will be those who will not know Paul Curtis, but they will be standing on foundations that you have built. You will always be remembered as a great friend to us all in this extremely difficult and vitally important work. Many children are now living happier lives and many families are experiencing greater growth together because of your work. You are leaving all of us much better for our having had you as our friend, our Mentor, and our leader.

Sincerely, Richard J. Anderson, Director